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## **Senate will act swiftly to fund Michigan National Guard hurricane disaster relief**

**LANSING** – The Michigan Senate is taking prompt action to support the Michigan National Guard’s efforts to assist those affected by Hurricane Katrina by agreeing to authorize money for the operations, announced Sen. Bruce Patterson, R-Canton.

The Senate plans to vote on authorizing \$3 million to deploy members of the Michigan National Guard to parts of Louisiana and Mississippi, which were devastated by the powerful hurricane that struck earlier this week. Parts of New Orleans remain underwater because of breached levees.

“Our separate states are still one nation,” Patterson said. “What slams the Gulf so hard also hurts our hearts. We stand ready to do all we can to help in this hour of national catastrophe. I urge people to offer their help, financial and otherwise, to reputable relief agencies such as the Red Cross, and religious groups, to help fund efforts that will take months, even years to complete. Every bit will help. And don’t forget to pray.”

Current estimates are that thousands of people were killed by the hurricane and flooding; damage costs have been put at as much as \$25 billion, according to news reports.

The Guard will deploy as soon as possible using existing funds. The money appropriated by the Legislature will replace that money. Federal funds will then reimburse the state.

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